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GROUNDBREAKING HELD FOR BOND INITIATIVE AT MATTAWAN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

MATTAWAN – Monday, March 10, marked a historic milestone for Mattawan Consolidated Schools as the district broke ground on the first phase of a comprehensive, multi-year school construction project. This initiative follows the approval of a $110 million dollar school construction bond by voters in May 2024.

Monday's groundbreaking ceremony kicks off a series of significant improvements, starting with the renovation of the district's stadium. The first phase of the stadium project will include the installation of a new, state-of-the-art multi-sport turf field and track, enhancing athletic opportunities for students and the community. Subsequent phases will focus on upgrading bleachers, perimeter fencing, and the construction of new entryways and concessions.

In conjunction with Veridus Group, serving as the Owner's Representative, Architect and Design group, TowerPinkser, and Construction Firm AVB, the groundbreaking is only the beginning of a transformative journey that will unfold over the next five years, impacting every corner of the district. In addition to the stadium renovation, the bond initiative will address key areas such as:

- Replacement of aging furniture at the middle and high schools for both students and staff,
- Renovations to older science areas in middle and high schools
- Enhancements to the high school auditorium
- Solutions to alleviate overcrowded cafeteria space at the middle school
- Renovations to bathrooms at the middle and high schools
- Construction of new transportation and maintenance facilities
- The creation of an expansive, approximately 60,000-square-foot multi-purpose field house designed for year-round use
- The addition of an aquatic center to enhance student wellness and community engagement
- The construction of a new turf soccer field
- A new 12-court tennis complex
- Upgraded practice fields and youth sports spaces

Mattawan Consolidated Schools Superintendent Randy Fleenor is shown at a groundbreaking held Monday, March 10, for Phase 1 of multi-year school construction project. In May of 2024, district voters approved of the $110 million district wide construction bond issue.
Photo courtesy /Mattawan Consolidated Schools

Members of the Mattawan Board of Education and Central Office are shown with ceremonial shovels during a groundbreaking held Monday, March 10, that will start Phase 1 of a multi-year school construction project. Shown from left, Randy Fleenor, superintendent, Vickie Herzberg, Marika Hawes-Ruhrup, Dr.Mark Noffsinger, Shari Magrath, Rick George, Onur Arugaslan, Ted Roethlisberger, and Jay Larner, assistant superintendent.

Members of the Mattawan varsity football team and coaches were on hand Monday, March 10, during the groundbreaking for Phase 1 of a $110 million dollar school construction project that was approved by school district voters in May of 2024.

"These projects are historic in nature and will forever change our district and community," said Superintendent Randy Fleenor. "We are incredibly grateful to the voters who made this possible. Their support ensures that our students have access to modern, safe, and efficient learning environments that foster growth, achievement, and wellbeing."

Ted Roethlisberger, Board of Education President, expressed his excitement about the future of the district, stating, "These projects are truly transformative, not just for our students, but for the entire Mattawan community. We are incredibly grateful to the voters for placing their trust in us. This bond initiative will have a lasting impact on the educational experience of every student and will create facilities that our community will be proud of for generations. The support we've received will forever change the trajectory of our schools and our community, and we are excited to begin this important work."

"The bond initiative represents a commitment to the future of the district, ensuring that Mattawan Consolidated Schools can continue to provide exceptional educational experiences for generations to come," said Supt. Fleenor.

Supt. Fleenor concluded, "Thank you to our community for making this exciting new chapter in our history possible."

Stolen vehicle recovered, felon found in possession of firearms

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

PAW PAW TWP. – A stolen vehicle was recovered, in addition to several guns and ammunition, while a felon was found to be in possession of firearms, following an incident that occurred Friday, March 14, in Paw Paw Township, according to a press release from the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office.

Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott reported that on March 14, at 6:30 p.m., Sheriff's deputies were dispatched to a residence in the 36000 block of 72nd Avenue, Paw Paw Township, for a report of an assault. Sheriff Abbott said that the suspect had fled on foot prior to deputies' arrival. While on scene investigating that assault and looking for the suspect, they located a vehicle on the property that had been reported stolen out of Dowagiac.

Deputies were able to secure a search warrant for the incident location. A search of the residence, outbuildings, and property was conducted, and deputies located a small amount of methamphetamine as well as multiple firearms and ammunition. Sheriff Abbott said the owner and primary resident of the property is not able to legally possess or own any firearms or ammunition.

Deputies seized eight long guns, one pistol, and a couple hundred rounds of various ammunition for the firearms. The original assault suspect was not located on the property. The stolen vehicle was turned over to Dowagiac Police Department. Reports will be forwarded to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for review of charges on the original assault suspect as well as the property owner.

BOC hopes to get $3 million grant for dispatch/emergency center

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer

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PAW PAW - Van Buren County Commissioners on Tuesday, March 11, approved a re-quest, on an expedited basis, the submission of an application for Congressionally Di-rected Spending (CDS) for $3 million to construct a new 911 Dispatch/Emergency Opera-tions Center (911/EOC). The CDS program, sponsored by Senator Gary Peters under the Homeland Security Subcommittee, provides funding for high-impact public safety projects like 911/EOCs.

Commissioners said a fully operational 911/EOC is essential to support emergency response infrastructure, ensure public safety during major incidents, and meet require-ments for the Palisades Nuclear Power Plant restart. The estimated project cost is approxi-mately $10 million, with county-own land available for the site and funding to be supple-mented by General Fund contributions, partnerships, and potential bonding if necessary.

Commissioners approved a resolution to authorize the county IT director to enter in-to the IT service agreement with the Paw Paw Police Department. Van Buren County IT De-partment has been providing IT support to the Paw Paw Police Department for more than five years without a formal agreement. Commissioners said the absence of a formal agreement has resulted in uncompensated IT support services provided to the Paw Paw Po-lice Department.

The proposed three-year agreement establishes a flat rate of $5,000 per year for 100 hours of IT support, with additional hours billed at $50 per hour as needed. Revenue from this agreement will be deposited into an account to offset IT overtime wages.

Commissioners approved a request from Michigan State Police (MSP) for out-of-state training, including airfare, registration, and meals for one trooper, as well as lodging and a car rental for six troopers. Commissioners said the training is essential for maintain-ing the preparedness and effectiveness of MSP personnel, ensuring they remain up to date on the latest law enforcement techniques and procedures.

Commissioners said MSP routinely requests lodging and travel assistance for train-ing at least once a year, with this being the first such request for 2025. Funding for this training has been allo-cated in the Drug/Forfeiture account, ensuring there is no additional financial burden on the general fund.

The replacement of the carpet on the lower level of the South Haven Courthouse was approved by commissioners as part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with an allocat-ed budget of $35,000. A bid for the project was received from Home Improvement Supply, Paw Paw, for $24,829.17, which is within the approved budget. Commissioners said re-placing the carpet is necessary to maintain the courthouse's safety, cleanliness, and over-all condition.

Commissioners also approved the replacement of windows in the county admin-istration building as part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with an allocated budget of $40,000. A bid for the window replacement project was received from Lyster Exteriors Inc., for $51,730, exceeding the initial estimate. Lyster Exteriors Inc. will have the necessary equipment on-site to replace the siding at the same time, minimizing disruptions and en-suring efficiency in project completion. Combining the siding and window replacement projects will streamline the process and reduce future logistical challenges.

Commissioners approved the following appointments to the Van Buren County Parks and Recreation Commission.

The following individuals were appointed with terms as indicated: Kurt Doroh, Wayne Nelson, and Joe Parman (Ex Officio); Mike Chappel and Gail Patterson-Gladney (County Commission, terms until replaced or Jan. 1, 2028); John Small and Becky Gra-bemeyer (terms until Jan. 1, 2026); and Paul Garrod, Daywi Cook, and Emilly Hickmott (terms until Jan. 1, 2027). The Van Buren County Parks and Recreation Board requires ap-pointed members to ensure compliance with state law and effective operations.

CROP Hunger Walk Benefit Concert to Feature Jean Watson and Vineyard Chicks

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
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PAW PAW - A benefit concert for the 2025 Van Buren County CROP (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) Hunger Walk, featuring Christian recording artist Jean Watson and Vineyard Chicks will be held Sunday, March 30, at 3 p.m. at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church. 420 W. Michigan Ave.

"My motto in ministry has always been to "love God by loving one in front of you," said Watson. "And this year, I had the opportunity to do just that. In February, my 93-year-old mother was hospitalized with COVID and pneumonia. So, for the past month, or so, I laid aside my music ministry schedule to be in Pennsylvania caring for her. Thankfully, she has recovered well, and I am now back in Michigan preparing for an exciting year ahead."

She continued, "For much of 2024, I was working on a new album in Nashville with renowned producer, Jonathan Crone. (Dolly Parton, Bebe and Cece Winans, and many others). Jonathan has been the mastermind behind my music for many years, and I was thrilled to be able to spend so much time with him crafting this new project," said Watson.

Watson said, "The album, entitled, "When I was Fearless," is the first work I have ever done which is almost entirely self-composed. Each song is like an entry from my journal expressing my joys, disappointments and the hope of living with childlike fearlessness – a hope I believe will resonate with many listeners."

She said, "In addition to my original songs, I have recorded one hymn and three cover songs, including an orchestral rendition of the Kansas classic "Dust in the Wind."

Watson is joined on this project by her daughter, "Kat Wells" and the legendary Russ Taff. "I think you can tell why I am so excited about this album! The project is slated to be released in early June, but I will surely share a taste of the new music at the CROP Walk fundraiser on March 30," said Watson.

In addition to the new music, Watson has some new destinations lined up this year. In June, she will return to Ireland to lead a women's conference, and later that month, a trip to South Bend, Ind., for a women's conference, where she will be headlining at "Praise by the Pier." A Christmas tour is planned in California.

Watson continues to lead worship at New Hope Family Church in Paw Paw and plays violin in the Kalamazoo Symphony.

Vineyard Chicks, a three-sister musical group, will open the concert. The sisters are Kayla, Trie, and Bunkie. Kayla began her musical career on the piano at the age of two, while Trie plays the drums, and Bunkie provides rhythm and leads on guitar and melodica.

In addition to performing Christian-based songs, the trio are also well versed in other music genres. Kayla sings lead on pop and R&B songs. Trie sings lead on classic rock and alternative rock and Bunkie sings lead on country and modern diva songs.

The girls formed Vineyard Chicks three years ago (the name was developed from their Lawrence area farm which features a vineyard and chickens) and played their first official gig at the 2023 Van Buren Youth Fair. It was at that fair where the girls competed for several years in the Talent Show. They will return to the 2025 fair on Monday night, July 14, following the Talent Show.

Vineyard Chicks can be found on social media outlets including TikTok: @ vineyard chickssisters; and YouTube: @ vineyardchicks. The girls have already amassed more than 6,000 followers on social media. Daily postings are featured on TikTok, and weekly studio recordings may be found on YouTube. Vineyard Chicks is also streaming on Spotify, Apple Music and more.

The band is currently in the process of recording another EP and will perform an Adele tribute concert at The Lucky Wolf in Paw Paw this spring.

The Van Buren County CROP Hunger Walk is slated for April 27, at 2 p.m. at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church. One quarter of all funds raised will return to Van Buren County and be distributed equally among six area food pantries.

South Haven Performance Series announces 2025 concerts

By James Windell

The South Haven Performance Series, committed to providing a rich mixture of musical arts for area residents and visitors, announced its 2025 concert season.

The Series launches on Friday, June 20 with the Majestic Brass Ensemble of Grand Rapids, an octet composed of some of the finest musicians in West Michigan. The group presents concerts that continue the rich tradition of brass chamber music. Members of the Majestic Brass Ensemble of Grand Rapids perform with the Grand Rapids, Detroit and Chicago Symphonies and are on the faculty at Michigan State, Central Michigan, Western Michigan and Grand Valley State universities.

The second concert in the series will take place on Friday, July 18 and will feature the Burdick-Thorne String Quartet who will be making their premier performance in South Haven. The quartet is an endowed in-residence ensemble of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra and are made up of Stefan Hubenov and Lisa Williams, violinists; Nicholas Jeffery, viola; and Igor Cetkovic, cello. All four of the musicians hold principal chairs in the KSO and are part of the orchestra's outreach program.

Highlighting the third concert of the season will be the pioneering internationally recognized oboe, bassoon and piano ensemble, the Poulenc Trio. They will perform on Friday, August 15. Members of the Poulenc Trio are Irina Kaplan Lande, piano; Aleh Remezau, oboe; and Bryan Young, bassoon. Over its 20-year history the trio has become one of the most sought-after piano and woodwind ensembles in the country presenting concerts in 47 states and at prestigious music festivals in Italy, Mexico and Russia.

The South Haven Performance Series season will conclude on Sunday, December 21 with a return holiday concert by the premiere professional choral ensemble Vox GR. The ensemble was enthusiastically received in South Haven this past December with their repertoire of choral music that stretched across all eras by composers of diverse backgrounds.

"We are delighted to be presenting concert performances that embody a diverse range of classical ensembles," said President Robert Linstrom. "Brass, string, woodwind and choral ensembles will provide a dynamic combination of concerts in 2025 that continue our commitment to contribute to the cultural fabric of our community."

The South Haven Performance Series is an all-volunteer community-based organization and all concerts are provided with an affordable admission price thanks to the generous support of individual donors, corporate sponsors and the South Haven Area Community Foundation.

This year's concerts will be held at two locations. The June and December concerts will be presented at the Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, 06321 Blue Star Memorial Highway, and the July and August concerts at the First United Methodist Church, 429 Michigan Ave. The June, July and August concerts will begin at 7 p.m. and the December concert at 4 p.m. Admission to the June, July and August concerts is $15. Admission to the December concert is free as a holiday gift to the community. Students are always admitted free. Tickets are cash at the door on the day of the concert.

More information about the South Haven Performance Series is available at southhavenperformanceseries.org.

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2ND FRONT PAGE

Four fire departments battle Bangor house fire

Firefighters from four Van Buren County fire departments joined in battling a structure fire Thursday night at 68699 38th Avenue, Bangor Township.

Bangor Community Department was dispatched at 9 p.m. Mutual aid was requested from Columbia Township FD, Covert Township FD and South Haven Area Emergency Services.

The home was engulfed in flames upon arrival.

The occupants safely evacuated the residence.

The cause remains under investigation.

Second Bangor residence in less than week destroyed by fire

For the second time in less than a week, fire has destroyed a residence in Bangor Township of Van Buren County.

Bangor Community Fire Department responded to a structure fire at 38041 62nd Street at 11:55 a.m. on Monday.

The double-wide trailer was fully engulfed in flames upon arrival, according to Bangor Fire Chief Derek Babcock. Mutual aid assistance was provided by the Columbia Township FD, Hartford FD and South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES).

The fire started when flammable liquid being poured into a portable stove was spilled and caught on fire, according Van Buren Sheriff deputies who investigated. The person who was pouring the liquid suffered burns to his legs. He was treated at the scene by Van Buren Emergency Medical Services (VBMS) personnel.

Damage was so extensive that a earth mover needed to be brought to the scene so firefighters could extinguish hot spots.

Last Thursday (March 13) a residential structure in Bangor Township was extensively damaged by fire.

Permanent gates installed around South Haven pier

By James Windell

One of the most charming attractions of South Haven is the pier leading to the 100-year-old red lighthouse on Lake Michigan. While the pier is one of the beauties of South Haven's beach, it is also a dangerous spot – especially when there is rough weather.

As a result of the hazard posed by the pier due to ice, waves and strong winds, permanent gates have been installed around the pier. In the works for more than a year, the permanent gates were put up last week, replacing the barricades and chains. The pier gates serve as a mechanism to close the piers when inclement weather or dangerous conditions make the area unsafe.

"We worked with the Army Corps of Engineers," Kate Hosier, South Haven City Manager, said, "in order to make certain improvement along the pier. That included the pier gates and the catwalk."

The Army Corps of Engineers actually owns the south pier, while the city of South Haven owns the catwalk leading to the lighthouse. Since the piers are owned by the federal government, permission was needed from the Corps of Engineers to install the access gates. While awaiting permission, the city just placed a chain across the access during high waves with a warning sign. Often these cautions were ignored.

"The city formed an ad hoc committee to look over calls for improvement to beach safety," Hosier said. "That included reaching access to the piers because people were heading out there without necessarily knowing they could be swept off. That committee recommended a few changes, one being the installation of permanent gates that could be closed in inclement weather."

The pier is typically closed when red flags are flying, due to wind conditions on Lake Michigan that result in waves reaching a magnitude where the pier may be awash, or during the winter months when ice builds up on the pier. There have been past incidents when people on the pier were swept off into the water by high winds or waves.

"There's been an ordinance since 2022, that says that after being told the pier is closed and you still access it anyway you could be facing a $1000 fine," Hosier said.

For updated information on whether the pier is open or closed, you can always check the city's website at https://www.southhavenmi.gov/parks_and_recreation/beach_flag_information.php. Additionally, you can text "beaches" to 888777 for real-time text alerts.

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Friends of Van Buren District Library support local libraries with grants

In 2024, the Friends of Van Buren District Library (VBDL) continued their annual Branch Grant program to great success. In May of 2024 the Friends of VBDL gave out $2,700, or $450 to each eligible branch in the VBDL system. Grant funds could be used for anything that library staff believed would advance the mission of the VBDL to provide "equitable access to a world of resources, reading, and lifelong learning." These grants were made possible through the member fees and donations raised by the Friends of VBDL. The Friends of VBDL provide Branch Grants each year to the branches of the Van Buren District Library system.

Each VBDL branch had an opportunity to share how the grant funds were used locally. The staff were creative in how they used the additional funding to improve the library experience for visits. Below is a summary of how the grants were used.

Antwerp Sunshine - Mattawan

The Antwerp Sunshine Branch put their grant funds toward bringing some delicious programming to their patrons. Brenda Decker, Branch Manager, brought in The Candy Lady from Portage to teach 20 people how to make sweet chocolate treats like peppermint bark and butterfly suckers. According to Branch Manager Decker, "Everyone enjoyed the class and asked if we could have her back!"

Bangor

At Bangor, the branch used the 2024 grant to make a portion of the library more welcoming for teens with the goal of bringing more teen patrons in. Items were purchased to create a Just for Teens space to help the library meet everyone's needs. In addition, a divider was added to create a small nook with a little more privacy to house them in.

The Bangor branch filled the teen space with the following items to fill out the space: Two swivel chairs, a small table, a phone charging station, a teen art cart, card games, teen resources, and two bean bags. Branch Manager Yvette Hamilton, said, "So far, we have had great response!"

Gobles

The Gobles Branch Library was able to use their grant funds to help enhance the library's programing offerings. The branch has had recent success reaching a hard to hit demographic with a graphic novel book club targeted at youth aged 8-13. Staff used the branch grant to purchase graphic novels for the book club members to keep. Funds went to support the return of walking tour programs with the purchase of portable headset/ microphone and speaker. As Branch Manager Barb Insidioso, said, "We have that now, ready to help us launch in 2025!"

The Gobles Branch also used some of the grant funding to make it easier for staff to do their jobs. First a long-standing problem of moving materials to off-site events (back-to-school nights, literacy nights, etc.) was solved with a heavy-duty collapsible wagon. Lastly, the branch was able to replace an aging, but still technically functionally paper cutter with a new one. The library cuts a lot of paper for programs and the new machine is making a difference

"WowWee! The blade makes such a satisfying swish on each cut!" said one staff member. "The staffers who plan the Gobles Branch programming cannot stop singing the praises of this paper cutter," said Branch Manager Insidioso.

Lawrence

The Lawrence Branch also used their grant funds to make program logistics easier for staff and patrons. The branch purchased additional seating and storage. The branch reported, "We often have a full house for programs and use every chair in the building, including the children's seating. These additional chairs will help us accommodate a big group and they are easily stored on our back-room wall." The branch also improved the program experience for presenters by purchasing an adjustable laptop stand that can easily be moved around.

Webster Memorial

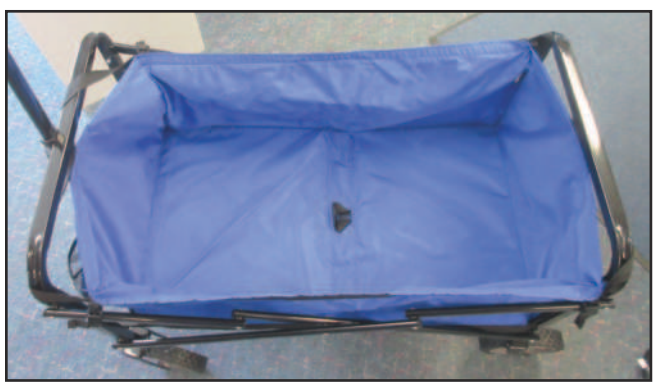
In Decatur, the Webster Memorial Branch is planning to cook up some great programs with their branch grant funds. The money was used to purchase a hot plate and kitchen utensils for cooking programs. These have already been used for a ramen cooking program. The children's area also got a new alphabet rug to replace a one that had been well loved. The rug is used to "sit on and it cements the alphabet through letter recognition fun ('Can you go sit on the G?')".

This branch also purchased a cart to make storing and moving supplies, specifically one for craft program supplies. The branch is very pleased with this, reporting "Before having this cart, Emily had to continuously lug all the supplies from the basement, and this not only organizes them, but is very easy to put on the elevator and push into the Community Room for programs."

The Friends of Van Buren District Library was established in 1983 with the mission of maintaining an association of people interested in supporting and encouraging the use of the Van Buren District Library System. That mission continues to this day with the funds raised going back to support programming, staff development, and more at the seven branches of the Van Buren District Library.

The Friends of VBDL are always looking for members to join them in support of the local libraries. For more information or to join the Friends of VBDL, e-mail WebsterFriends@VBDL.org or call (269) 436-0520.

Antwerp Sunshine Branch Library served as host for The Candy Lady from Portage.



The Gobles Branch Library purchased a heavy-duty collapsible wagon.

The Bangor Branch Library created a Just for Teens Space.

The Webster Memorial Library in Decatur purchased a new alphabet rug for the Children's Area.

The Lawrence Branch Library purchased new chairs.

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Road Commission employee awarded "Program Manager of the Year"

LAWRENCE - Van Buren County Road Commission Engineering Technician David Clift was recently honored by the County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan with the "Program Manager of the Year" Award at the 2025 County Engineers' Workshop in Bellaire.

In 2024, Clift led a $1.8 million project on County Road 388 from County Road 653 South to the Kalamazoo County line. The project included crushing and widening the existing pavement, enhancing drainage, removing trees, and re-paving the roadway. The improvements, completed by the awarded contractor Brad Thomas Excavating of South Haven, were secured through a competitive sealed bid process.

What made this project unique was its funding collaboration - Pine Grove Township's ARPA funds, Van Buren County ARPA funds, and Road Commission transportation funds were combined to accomplish the project. ARPA is the American Rescue Plan Act, a federal stimulus package that provided financial aid to individuals, businesses, and governments to address the economic and public health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Residents and travelers alike now enjoy a safer, more efficient roadway, reflecting the project's commitment to sustainability and long-term functionality.

"David Clift's recognition as the County Road Association of Michigan's Program Manager of the Year reflects his remarkable dedication, and exceptional leadership", said Bret Witkowski, Managing Director of the Van Buren County Road Commission. "His work has significantly advanced our projects and inspired our team to achieve excellence. We are incredibly proud to have David as a key member of the Van Buren County Road Commission, and this award is a well-deserved acknowledgment of his hard work and commitment to our community."

The CRA of Michigan represents the interests of Michigan's 83 county road agencies that collectively maintain 75 percent of Michigan's road miles – more than 90,000 miles of roads and 5,900 bridges.

Decatur man dies in two-vehicle crash

HAMILTON TWP. A man died in a two-vehicle crash Sunday night, March 16, in Hamilton Township, according to the Michigan State Police (MSP).

The crash occurred at approximately 7:35 p.m., on M-51 near County Road 215.

A 31-year-old Decatur man driving a vehicle, died at the scene. A 47-year-old Eau Claire man traveling in a vehicle, suffered minor injuries and was taken to a hospital for treatment.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation. Alcohol and/or drugs may be factors, according to authorities.

Van Buren Emergency Medical Services (EMS), the Decatur-Hamilton Fire Department, Decatur Police Department and Van Buren County Sheriff's Office assisted at the scene.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Michigan State Police Paw Paw Post at (269) 657-5551.

Grocery store employee assaulted, suspect allegedly intoxicated

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response was dispatched to Wagoner's grocery store in Bloomingdale for an assault/trespassing call. The suspect showed up at the store intoxicated and had previously been trespassed by our office to not return there. One of the employees tried to get the suspect to leave and was assaulted. The suspect was lodged for the incident.

Unform Response had a pursuit with an Adult Foster Care (AFC) client who stole the caretaker's car. Deputies pursued the vehicle until it left the county, then terminated the pursuit for various reasons. The suspect ran out of gas in Kalamazoo County. Once reports are completed, charges will be sought through the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office.

While on patrol, the shift sergeant stopped an ATV at the Hartford/Lawrence Township line. A search of a bag in the driver's possession had methamphetamine and syringes in it. Charges are forthcoming for the incident.

Deputies were dispatched to a domestic assault in Waverly Township. The husband/suspect left prior to deputies' arrival. The investigation found an assault did take place. Deputies were unable to locate the suspect. The report is being submitted to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for charges.

"Our Domestic Preparedness/Emergency Management Division attended FEMA Training this past week. It was an exercise evaluator course that will help them evaluate exercises at Holtec and neighboring counties," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott.

Deputies were dispatched to a one-month-old in distress/full arrest in Arlington Township. Upon arrival, the deputy evaluated the one-month-old and found the breathing to be stopping and starting. Emergency measures were performed by the deputy which was successful by getting the child to cough up what was causing the airway obstruction. "Great job by the deputy keeping his composure, hence having a positive end in a bad situation," said Sheriff Abbott.

Charges were authorized on an inmate for assaulting a sergeant in corrections. Charges were also authorized on an inmate for damaging a protective glass in a holding cell.

March has been designated Ladder Safety Month. Every year, approximately 500,000 people are treated for ladder-related injuries each year in the United States. The American Ladder Institute is offering free training in proper ladder usage and ladder safety at: https://www.laddersafetytraining.org/. For more information, contact Peter Zeller at: pete@cunninghambaron.com.

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Van Buren County residents invited to review flood maps

Van Buren County Residents Invited to Review Flood Maps

Preliminary flood risk information and updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are available for review by residents and business owners in Van Buren County. Property owners are encouraged to review the latest information to learn about local flood risks and potential future flood insurance requirements. Community stakeholders can identify any concerns or questions about the information provided and participate in the 90-day appeal and comment period.

The 90-day appeal period will begin on or around March 20, 2025. The preliminary maps and changes from current maps may be viewed online at the FEMA Flood Map Changes Viewer: msc.fema.gov/fmcv.

The updated maps were produced in coordination with local, state, and FEMA officials. Significant community review of the maps has already taken place, but before the maps become final, community stakeholders can identify any concerns or questions about the information provided and submit appeals or comments. Contact your local floodplain administrator to do so.

- Appeals must include technical information, such as hydraulic or hydrologic data, to support the claim.
- Appeals cannot be based on the effects of proposed projects or projects started after the study is in progress.
- If property owners see incorrect information that does not change the flood hazard information, such as a missing or misspelled road name in the Special Flood Hazard Area or an incorrect corporate boundary, they can submit a written comment.
- The next step in the mapping process is the resolution of all comments and appeals. Once they are resolved, FEMA will notify communities of the effective date of the final maps.
- For more information about the flood maps:
- Use a live chat service about flood maps at go.usa.gov/r6C (just click on the "Live Chat" icon during operating hours).
- Contact a FEMA Map Specialist by telephone toll-free at 1-877-FEMA-MAP (1-877-336-2627) or by email at FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov.

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VIEWPOINT

Let's not spoil special relationship with Canada

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX ■ PUBLISHER ■

President Trump likes to say his favorite word is "tariff." He hopes to use the word to force corporations to locate in the United States, instead of other countries where they have tax and trade advantages. More corporations mean more factories which in turn, Trump believes, will provide more jobs, cut the cost of consumer goods, thus put more money in the pockets of taxpayers.

I can't argue with increased tariffs being placed on China, India and the like, where their tariffs on American goods, pretty much prohibit us from selling a lot of goods in those countries. Ditto Europe where big ticket items like BMW, Audi, Mercedes Benz etc are sold by the millions here, but nary a GM or Ford product can be found on European roads because of high tariffs.

However, in the case of our good neighbors and allies, Canada and Mexico, I am not in favor of imposing the suggested 25 or 50 percent tariffs Trump is threatening to impose. For decades, in the case of Canada, the U.S. has maintained a deeply integrated economic relationship, one that has benefited consumers in both nations.

Part of that integration has been products produced by the thousands of miles of forests in Canada. Much of our lumber comes from those forests. Additionally, newsprint which is used by every newspaper printed in the U.S. comes from paper mills that are only located in Canada.

In the case of our newspapers, printing is close to 25% of our total costs. It is our biggest expense item- more than payroll. Raw materials, paper and ink, make up approximately 60% of all printing costs. A 25 or 50 percent tariff would add another cost to newspapers, particularly weekly, that many won't be able to absorb.

Paul Deegan, CEO of News Media, says it best. "A historic 140-year-old newspaper in New York recently closed, and others are struggling with increased expenses for essential materials like ink, plates and paper. These issues might not always make front-page headlines, but the are having a real impact on the viability of the newspaper industry."

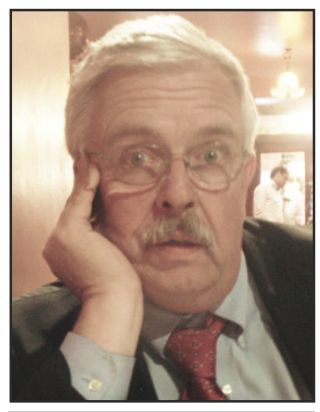
He added, "These trade barriers are not only making it harder for newspapers to survive, but they are also straining the long-standing economic interdependence between the two nations. The U.S. has more significant trade issues with countries like China, Mexico and Germany. Canada has been caught in the middle."

In Michigan we have always enjoyed a terrific relationship with Canada. I know it's different now but as youth we crossed the border often to visit Windsor. Going through the tunnel was always a special treat. My uncle lived in Sarnia, and we made several trips across the Bluewater Bridge. It was like going to Ohio or Indiana, just as frequent and Canadian people and businesses always welcomed us with open arms.

I would hate to see those strong ties between Michigan and Ontario be broker or even strained. As Deegan said, "We have been friends forever, and we need to get back to that relationship. We need to make sure the rhetoric is dialed back."

I couldn't agree more.

Life as Performance Art



G CORWIN STOPPEL

BY G.C. STOPPEL

Few hold party politics and politicians in high esteem. Campaigns grow longer and more expensive and polarization fiercer. Consensus and compromise are no longer goals; they are dirty words.

The last presidential election was packed with negative ads and brutal. Worse, we know that the cycle will start long before the 2026 elections. I am certain the news and social media will poke all the candidates, the better to stir things up and get stories.

Little wonder we look to the distant past and wish everyone would get along like they did in the good old days.

Next year, in addition to national elections, our country will celebrate its 250th birthday. In the coming months, we'll devote more time to studying our past to understand better where we are today.

April 19 this year will mark the anniversary of the morning after Paul Revere's ride and The Shot Heard 'Round the World rang out that started the battles of Concord and Lexington.

With that in mind, the Sons of the American Revolution have been producing short videos and podcasts about the politicians of this era. Suffice it to note it is not the romantic history of Longfellow's poem.

There was nothing mythic about the realities of that war.The political climate of colonial America was as toxic as it is today.

Joseph Ellis's book "Founding Brothers" — which would have us believe that Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Hamilton and others got along likr choir boys having tea with their bishop — was malarkey.

The real story is that they argued almost every point in trying to work with the British government. Then, just as now, they let themselves to be distracted.

Some thought compromise with London was a good idea; others that the only way to resolve the differences was to declare war. And when they weren't opposing the British, they were at each other's throats over slavery, the economy and who should be leading the military.

Franklin, Adams and Jefferson were assigned the job of writing what became our Declaration of Independence. They focused on the job, but quickly grew to despise each other. Adams hated Jefferson, Jefferson did not like Franklin and Franklin thought Adams was a brilliant but sour old puritan.

Other delegates to the Continental Congress turned on Caesar Romney of Delaware, claiming that his health (he had cancer of the jaw) prohibited him from carrying his share of the workload and that he drank too much. Apparently others did, too, because the biggest expense of the delegates was their bar bill.

Not all were impressed with George Washington, and there were several attempts to demote and replace him. Some of Washington's own generals attempted to undermine him so they could get the job.

Benedict Arnold was so frustrated he switched sides to join the British. Aaron Burr hated Hamilton and later killed him in a duel. Somehow, they muddled through.

Skip ahead a few years to the Constitutional Convention of 1787. The loose Confederation of States was not working and eventually there was consensus the country needed a strong central government.

Delegates worked at it, but they fought each other all the while they invented a new form of government.

Who we today view as Founding Fathers could be rude and petty. Jefferson had designed and built the magnificent Monticello for his home in Virginia. Just down the hill from him, James Madison owned land and wanted to build his home, Montpelier.

Jefferson had earned a reputation as an architect, so Madison asked for some help with the plans. That must have been a surprise because the two were political rivals.

Jefferson got cheap revenge by designing the doorway in Montpelier facing Jefferson's unusually low, so that Madison had to bow down to get through without bumping his head. The insult was not lost on James and Dolly.

Once Washington was elected President, he started acquiring enemies. Several members of his cabinet thought he was too stiff, formal and imperialistic. They were horrified when he raised a regiment to march on western New York during the Whiskey Rebellion. By the second term, his detractors were complaining that he was too old and unfocused to hold office.

Washington retired after two terms, John Adams became President, with Thomas Jefferson the VP. The two hated each other, and by the time Jefferson defeated Adams four years later they were not speaking to each other.

Adams was such a sore loser that he and Mrs. A left the White House in the middle of the night to avoid seeing Jefferson take the Oath of Office. Years passed before they exchanged letters.

Nothing has really changed in the 250 years since then. When we go from one President and legislative branch to the next, we see an endless round of squabbles and duplicity. Only the names and topics seem to change.

As for the accusation that a president is usurping too much power, no one gave the Senate. House and Democrats, more anxiety than Theodore Roosevelt. When Congress refused to protect wild life areas all across the country, TR outmaneuvered them by signing one executive order after another to create wildlife preserves from coast to coast.

Fortunately, there have been brief moments where there is compromise. Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn accomplished it when he invited Sens. Everett Dirksen and Lyndon Johnson to stop by his back room, the Board of Education, as he called it, to share a bottle of prime sipping whiskey.

Mr. Sam would get the two senators and a few members House members slightly buzzed, then tell them to quit fighting and do something productive for the good of the nation. Often as not, they compromised and the country moved forward.

There is a take home lesson for all of us in our history of politicians and their wrangling. As long as they were arguing or even raising their voices, there was conversation, keeping the hope alive that our country would survive.

Democracy is based on it, whereas dictatorships are based on fearful silence. Let today's crop of office holders shout and sputter away, inventing creative insults and more. It is a good thing. There is still hope for the future of our country.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I read a recent Letter to the Editor (LTTE) that referenced a quote from the French politician and philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville who visited America in the early 1830s. The quote was "America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great."

In Tocqueville's 1835 book "Democracy in America" he recognized that America's founders had created something never experienced in the history of the world. That was a successful republic that could be a model for governments worldwide. The aforementioned LTTE implied that America is not so good or great over the past couple of months and I presume that this LTTE author is dissatisfied with our nations turn of events since January 20th. If this is indeed the case I would offer an additional quote from Tocqueville; "The American Republic will endure until the day Congress discovers that it can bribe the public with the public's money."

It is a sad state of affairs that a small segment of American citizens is so reluctant to put America's best interests above petty partisan politics, that they instinctively reject any proposition not presented by their own group. Keep in mind that the traditional republican and democrat parties no longer exist, that horse left the barn a long time ago. The democratic party of JFK has been infiltrated by too many Marxists, Socialist and Anarchists in much the same way Lincoln's Republican party as well as the democrats have been infiltrated by too many globalists and greedy soulless bureaucrats.

The majority of American voters elected Donald Trump and republican majorities in our 2024 local, state and federal general elections knowing full well what their intentions were to make America great again. We all were aware of President Trumps plan for Elon Musk and DOGE in reducing the size of government as well a return to border security, election integrity, energy independence, stronger economy, national defense with a return to our Judeo-Christian republic and the rule of law. In essence returning America to the vision of President Reagan's shining city on a hill. That is the America of our founders' efforts. Very much unlike after the Obama and Biden elections, the American public has experienced no surprises with the Trump administration. The Obama administration enjoyed lecturing those in opposition to his socialization of America that "elections have consequences". Although true, it was more difficult to accept as we were not prepared for the depth of the deceit.

Tocqueville's warning has come to fruition with the trillions of dollars the progressive left, and worse, have received through the money laundering schemes of robbing American taxpayers through unelected governmental departments and nongovernment agencies. DOGE efforts exemplify the principle that if you want to determine the source and extent of corruption simply follow the money.

Progressives inaccurately claim that the actions of the Trump administration are illegal and unconstitutional. The left has always struggled with understanding our constitution and founding documents for the simple reason that they can't comprehend the concept of intent. Should they ever bother to read them, they childishly see these documents with no idea of what our founders wrote and why they authored them as they did. There are 94 federal judicial districts throughout the United States with the primary duty of a federal judge to interpret and enforce the constitutionality of federal laws. To further their obstructionists' activities, it has not been difficult for un-American globalists and opportunists to shop for corrupt federal judges who have no moral compunction to betray their oaths of office and act on their dogma rather than the rule of law.

Our 2024 general election results indicate beyond a shadow of a doubt that the goals of President Trump and his administration are the goals of the majority of American voters. The petty tirades against President Trump remind me of a quote by Eleanor Roosevelt:

"Great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, small minds discuss people."

John R. Young

OBITUARY

Jim VanWestrienen

Jim passed away March 11, 2025. in Paw Paw, Michigan, following a long battle with diabetes. He was born May 13, 1933, in Kalamazoo, Michigan, the eldest son of Henry Artis and G. Leone (Kier) vanWestrienen.

He graduated from Kalamazoo Central High School and Western Michigan University with a bachelor's degree in music education. He was a nine-year member of the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony and a life member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. After graduation, he proudly served his country in the Army Security Agency. He married his college sweetheart, the former Donna Rudness of Escanaba, MI on Dec. 29, 1956. They had an 18-month honeymoon while he served with the ASA in Europe.

Following an honorable discharge, he was employed in the public schools for more than 40 years in Mason County Eastern Schools, Mattawan Consolidated School and Paw Paw Public Schools, retiring in 1996. He was a charter member of the Kalamazoo Concert Band and played in the brass section for six years.

A member of the First Presbyterian Church, Paw Paw, since 1961, he was a Deacon, Elder, a Chancel Choir member, and for over 50 years, an organist, retiring in 2021. His special interests were his family, classical music, crossword puzzles, camping, the Detroit Tigers and Detroit Lions.

His wife of over 43 years, Donna passed away in 2000. He was also preceded in death by his parents, Henry and Leone vanWestrienen; his brothers, John and Paul; sister-in-law, Barbara, cousins, Mildred (Earl) Gaskill and Janice (Ron) Geschwendt; and infant nephew, Tommy.

He is survived by his daughter, Kathy (Stephen) McCloskey; grandson, Nathaniel; sister-in-law, Jan vanWestrienen; a niece, Jayne (Derek) Wirebaugh; a nephew, Jim (DeNae) vanWestrienen; and grandnieces and grandnephews.

The family will receive visitors Saturday, March 22, 2025, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 120 Pine St., Paw Paw. A celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. with the Rev. Gail Monsma and the Rev. Catharine McCloskey-Turner officiating. Private interment will be at Prospect Hill Cemetery, Paw Paw.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials be made to the First Presbyterian Church, 120 Pine St., Paw Paw, MI, 49079; Kalamazoo Junior Symphony Orchestra, 714 S. Westnedge Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49007; or The American Diabetes Association.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com

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2025 Educational Hero award winners announced

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

LAWRENCE – The 2025 Educational Hero Awards were recently announced during an awards ceremony held at the Van Buren Conference Center in Lawrence.

This year's recipients include:

BANGOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS -

Joanna Livieratos (GED teacher) As a GED teacher, Johanna works one-on-one with students to ensure they get the help they need. She cares about all the students, not just those in her class and is a valuable asset to the GED program.

Karen Shafer (Preschool teacher) For over four decades, serving Bangor since 1982, Karen has served in many roles, from preschool teacher, coach, and director to volunteering in many school organizations. Karen has gone above and beyond for Bangor Public Schools, positively impacting countless children's lives leaving a lasting impact on generations.

BLOOMINGDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS -

Brandon Lukes (Principal, Bloomingdale Middle/ High School) Brandon Lukes is a dedicated leader who brings energy, focus, and a deep sense of care to his role as principal. Known for his approachable nature and commitment to students, he fosters a positive school culture. His leadership has made a lasting impact on the Bloomingdale community, earning him the respect and admiration of students, staff, and families.

Brittany Mora (Third Grade teacher) - Brittany Mora is a passionate and innovative educator who has been an integral part of the Bloomingdale Elementary team for the past four years. A true teacher-leader, she excels in curriculum development, student interventions, and staff collaboration. Her dedication to student success and her commitment to the Bloomingdale community make her an inspiration to both colleagues and families.

COVERT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ana Maack (school counselor, VB Tech) Mrs. Maack is a dedicated advocate for students at Covert High School and VB Tech Center. She shows genuine care for their well-being and spends time educating them about future possibilities. Her patience and support have made a significant impact on how students view themselves.

Tiffany Johnson (Social studies MS/HS Teacher) Mrs. Johnson is a teacher who builds lasting relationships with students. She instills a love for history and empathy for others, and has impacted students through trips to the Zekelman Holocaust Museum and participation in a Walk Against Hate with the Michigan Anti-Defamation League. By sharing her own life story, she encourages students to aim high. Mrs. Johnson is a role model for both students and fellow teachers.

VAN BUREN ISD –

Roxie Swank (Middle College mentor) Roxie Swank is an exceptional Middle College mentor who goes above and beyond to support students across 11 districts in Van Buren County. She helps students see their potential for higher education and bridges the gap between secondary and postsecondary schooling. Roxie builds meaningful connections with students, offering insightful guidance and listening to their concerns. Roxie exemplifies empathy, integrity, and excellence, making a lasting difference in the lives of students. She is highly deserving of this recognition.

Brianne Killeen (Special Ed teacher consultant) Brianne is an exceptional leader and advocate for students, consistently supporting both Maple Creek and local school districts. She works diligently to ensure that students have the resources they need when transitioning back to their local schools, going above and beyond to help all students, not just those at Maple Creek. As a team leader for Behavior Specialists, Bri ensures her team is well-prepared and confident in supporting students. She also provides personal support to her colleagues, creating a comfortable, caring environment. Bri's dedication and leadership make her truly deserving of recognition for this award.

SOUTH HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS –

Adaly Lorenzo (Kitchen manager - Baseline MS) Adaly Lorenzo has made a significant impact on the school community,particularly in the Food Services Department. She ensures that meal programs meet nutritional needs while promoting healthy habits and fostering a sense of community. Adaly is kind, professional, and goes out of her way to make everyone feel valued and cared for. She accommodates dietary restrictions, provides snacks and care packages for those in need, and contributes to PBIS incentives, all with a smile. Her dedication and the positive changes she has brought to Baseline's Food Service Department make her a true hero deserving of recognition.

Carey Frost (Director of Curriculum/Homeless liaison) Carey Frost embodies the qualities of an exceptional educator and leader. She has shown extraordinary dedication by stepping into multiple leadership roles, including interim superintendent twice, elementary principal, and curriculum director, all while maintaining a positive attitude and offering support to those around her. What truly sets Carey apart is her kindness, compassion, and ability to remain calm and focused under pressure, creating a sense of stability everyone. She is an outstanding leader, colleague, and advocate for students and staff.

PAW PAW PUBLIC SCHOOLS –

Sydney Brown (Later Elementary music teacher) Sydney Brown brings love, creativity, and enthusiasm to inspire students to explore their talents through musicals and play productions. Her guidance helps students not only learn important skills but also build confidence, creating lasting memories. The

annual musicals have become a cornerstone of Later Elementary's culture, teaching valuable life lessons such as perseverance, discipline, and collaboration. Sydney fosters an environment where every child is encouraged to shine, boosting self-esteem and helping them discover their unique voices. Many students find a passance for the performing arts and form lasting friendships. Sydney's impact on her students and the Paw Paw community is truly heroic.

Shaun Wayman (High School ELA and Spanish teacher) Mr. Wayman makes learning both fun and educational, creating a positive environment where students not only learn but enjoy the process. He has personally impacted students by being approachable, patient, and supportive, especially when it comes to asking questions and understanding challenging material. His calm and understanding approach ensures that the classroom is a safe space where all students feel comfortable. Mr. Wayman's patience and creative teaching methods, such as using songs and tricks to help with Spanish verbs, have made learning easier and more enjoyable. He works hard to make his classes engaging, encouraging students to be excited and ready to learn.

DECATUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS –

Mitch is an exceptional special education teacher and case manager for grades 6-12 at Decatur, as well as a coach for multiple sports. He truly cares about his students' academic progress and independence, demonstrating patience and effective teaching methods, especially with students who struggle with focus. Whether as a teacher, case manager, or coach, Mitch is trusted by parents for his competence, compassion, and dedication. He is a valuable asset to Decatur Public Schools, and it's hoped he continues to advocate for students for many years.

Jon Baushke (Board of Education president) Jon recently retired from the school board after 13 years of service. He was instrumental in his leadership, being part of decisions that positively charged the district. Jon's leadership was crucial during COVID-19, bringing the community together during that tough time. He provided direction during our recent bond proposal, working with the planning committee that helped pass the bond. He is a true Raider and his support for the school is something we will always remember.

GOBLES PUBLIC SCHOOLS -

Veronica Salamanca (Youth Development Company (YDC) - Gobles location) Veronica is an exceptional educator and leader who manages a wide range of responsibilities with ease, always putting students first. She works tirelessly, arriving early and staying late and is deeply dedicated to the students' growth and success. Her positive attitude, hard work, and willingness to go above and beyond – like assisting in classrooms, updating bulletin boards, and translating communications for Spanish-speaking parents—have made a significant impact on the students at YDC. Veronica's dedication and the love she shows her students make her truly deserving of this award.

Megan Shien (Math teacher Gobles Middle/ High School) Megan Shein is an outstanding math instructor at Gobles Middle-High School, known for her dedication to helping students thrive. Her teaching focuses on building strong foundational skills and fostering collaboration, empowering students to take risks and excel in math. Her selflessness and impact make her an invaluable educator, and Gobles is fortunate to have her.

Lawrence Public Schools – Melissa Pyle (High School history teacher) Melissa is deeply committed to providing her students with excellent educational and athletic opportunities. She is always willing to help with any task, offering support to every student without hesitation.

Monica Taylor (Jr High English Language Arts teacher) Monica has greatly improved the quality of education in her district by fostering a culture of support, inclusivity, and innovation. She tailors learning experiences to meet diverse student needs and ensures all students have access to the resources they need to succeed. Her individualized support for students, such as helping one with learning disabilities, has had a profound impact, boosting academic success and confidence. Beyond the classroom, Monica collaborates with parents, staff, and the community to create an environment where students are empowered to excel.

HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS –

Stephanie Hallgren (Migrant Bilingual Teacher - Elementary) Stephanie is a dedicated advocate for migrant and bilingual students within her district. She works tirelessly to support students and their families, creating accommodations to help them achieve academic success. She is a trusted resource for families seeking help with academics, healthcare, field trips, and more. Her dedication makes her a true Educational Hero in the district.

Katie Olds (Project Lead The Way Teacher - High School) Katie goes above and beyond for her students and the community, inspiring them with new projects and technology in her lab. She frequently stays after school and works on weekends to create signs, shirts, and other products for the community. Her expertise and dedication make her a valuable asset to Hartford, and thestudents are lucky to have her as their teacher.

LAWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS –

Amanda Steinke (Athletics/Guidance secretary) Amanda consistently goes above and beyond for students at Lawton High School. She demonstrates an unwavering commitment to supporting students in her daily work as Athletics/Guidance Secretary, but also well beyond the walls of Lawton High School. She is remarkably committed to our place and always doing something outside of the school day to support students and the district. Amanda takes the time to get to know students on an individual level, fostering strong relationships built on trust and respect, to make students feel valued.

Laura Prior (First Grade teacher) Laura is a constant example of professionalism, mentorship, and leadership in her role as a first-grade teacher at Lawton Elementary School where she has served for an amazing 36 years. She has a calm way of making her colleagues, families, and students feel heard, understood, and deeply cared. Laura is a leader in the building and staff goes to Laura for advice, prayers, and support. Even in her 36th year as a teacher she is always up for more learning, continues to perfect her craft, and strives to improve as an educator. Her first-grade team has a growth mindset and is always looking for ways to improve and Laura is instrumental in fostering that culture within her team.

MATTAWAN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL -

Cecelia Davis (Special Education Teacher) Cecelia Davis founded the Mattawan No Limit Sports program, providing students with special needs the opportunity to participate in sports like tennis, bowling, and basketball. Cecelia tirelessly advocates for equity and inclusion, even arranging for students to play at a Pistons game. She dedicates herself to fundraising, organizing, and planning for the program year-round. Cecelia is an incredible teacher and person who truly deserves recognition for her outstanding contributions to Mattawan.

Lisa Paulson (Paraprofesional) - Lisa Paulson is an exceptional leader for the paraprofessional staff at Mattawan ECEC. She is kind, caring, and always ready to step in and solve problems quickly. Lisa greets students with a smile every morning and ensures their safety and organization at dismissal. Her leadership in managing afternoon bus dismissal is particularly impressive. Lisa's positive attitude and dedication make her an invaluable asset to the school, and she truly serves as a model paraprofessional.

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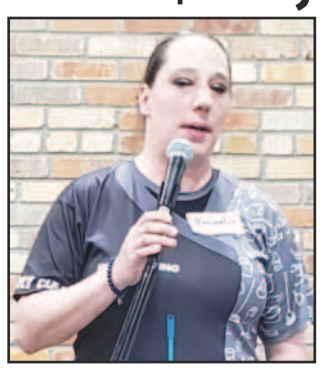
ADULTS: The Memory & Legacy of Emmett Till
Wed., March 26
4 pm-5 pm
ADULTS: Friends Board Meeting
Wed., March 26
6 pm-7 pm
CHILDREN: Knights at Night
Presented by Sentinels of the Rose. Offsite at Paw Paw Later Elementary
Thursday, March 27
6:30 pm-7:30 pm
ADULTS: Between the Lines Book Club
The Dog of the North by Elizabeth McKenzie
Visit pawpawlib.org or call 269.657.3800 for more information!

United Christian Services benefit raises $30,000 plus

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

This year's United Christian Services fundraiser, Plates of Plenty, was sold out.



Amanda, a former UCS client, was a speaker at the Thursday,March 13 fundraiser.

United Christian Services Director Alison Harrop

PAW PAW - The fourth annual United Christian Services (UCS) fundraiser, Plates of Plenty, held Thursday, March 13, at 600 E, Michigan Ave., raised just over $30,000 that included a silent auction, bidding, and ticket/table sales from the sold-out event.

"All money raised this evening will be allocated to serving those in our county. We appreciate your support for our organization and mission," said United Christian Services Director Alison Harrop.

This year, a new fundraiser unveiled at the event provided attendees the opportunity to participate in "Bid for a Cause." It gave attendees the chance to use a paddle to place bids, contributing toward helping a specific challenge facing clients of UCS.

During the dinner, a former UCS client, Amanda, spoke to those gathered. She said, "Today, I want to share my story. A story of resilience, hope, and the incredible impact that community support can have on someone's life."

She continued, "Years ago, I found myself in a very difficult situation. I was a single mother and was working full time. I had to make some hard choices financially. There were times I had to choose between food or paying the bills. I had fallen behind one month and things were piling up. I was completely overwhelmed. My electric had been turned off and I received an eviction notice the same day. I still remember watching my kids eat dinner while I was staring out the window wondering what I was going to do. I remember how the sun was shining."

Amanda was told about United Christian Service a few months before her downfall. "I decided to reach out and see what services were available. I always took pride in taking care of things for myself and it was hard to reach out for help. I called and the staff were very friendly and helpful. I didn't feel like they were judging me for my situation."

With help from UCS, Amanda got her electric turned back on and received help from UCS in paying her rent.

Amanda praised the efforts of UCS Director Alison Harrop saying, "She really went above and beyond. I was not expecting such a kind person to come into my life. She also helped me with food a few times between paychecks."

In the following months, Amanda was able to save enough money for emergencies. "I needed to have my car fixed and I was so proud that I had that money to be able to get it fixed without asking anyone for help," said Amanda.

Last year, Amanda started her own cleaning business. She is now able to support herself and her daughter, a student at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, where she is studying to become a special education teacher.

Amanda said, "I stand before you today as living proof that with community support anyone can overcome their struggles and achieve success. That success has a ripple effect throughout the community. UCS, with the help of generous donors like you, provided me with financial assistance and resources I desperately needed. Their encouragement meant the world to me and still does."

She concluded, "Thank you for your generosity and for believing in the potential of people like me. Together, we can continue to make a difference and offer a new start for people in the community."

UCS serves people with fixed income, those below the poverty line, the ALICE population (working poor) and those experiencing homelessness.

Harrop said that during the past year, 2024, UCS served 5,897 households, an increase of 6.5 percent from 2023, and saw a total of 43,742 needs met, a 35.5 percent increase from 2023.

Emergency assistance was provided to more than 400 adults and more than 200 children, as those numbers have more than doubled since 2021.

During 2024, UC S helped clients dealing with emergency assistance, rent, deposits, evictions, transportation, prescriptions/medical water utility deliverable fuel, among other areas.

According to a UCS Overview a total of 62 percent of the individuals served were at or below the poverty level, an increase of two percent from 2023.

Harrop told The Courier-Leader following the event, "What a great night! We are overwhelmed by the fantastic response from our community! Not only did we sell all the tickets for the event but in addition, the donations that came in on the night helped us surpass our goal! Thank you to all who donated. With your support we will be able to make a difference in so many local residents' lives."

She added, "I really would like to thank our sponsors, Barber Packaging, who provided funding for our delicious meal. And then thank you to all the hardworking volunteers who worked behind the scenes and on the night to make it so wonderful and so successful."

Next year's fundraiser will be 'Cups of Compassion,' "but we will have some bowls too for those who really wanted those," said Harrop.

She concluded, "We wouldn't achieve the impact we do without the support of over 19 churches and St. Vincent DePaul, more than 15 community organizations, numerous individual donors, legacy gifts, end of year giving, grants, including United Way, and fundraisers."

For more information about United Christian Services, visit: www.unitedchristianservices-evbc.com

Nominating petitions for city council, mayor at SH City Hall

By James Windell

South Haven City Council and Mayoral elections will take place this year. And there will be vacancies on the City Council to be filled.

City Council members, Joe Reeser, representing Ward 1, and George Sleeper, representing Ward 3, have both served on the council for two terms and will not be eligible to run in this year's elections. Also, Ward 2 representative Wendy Onuki, who is in her fourth year, has not announced that she will be seeking re-election. It is expected, however, that Mayor Annie Brown will choose to be a candidate for a second term of two years.

Anyone desiring to run for City Council or Mayor has until 4:00 pm on April 22, 2025, to turn in a nominating petition to the South Haven City Clerk's office. Nominating Petitions must have at least six (but no more than 20) qualified signatures from registered voters in the City of South Haven. Candidates for a City Council position must have signatures from registered voters within their ward, although the mayor's seat is an at-large position and registered voters can be from any ward within the city.

Candidates for a position must also fill out and submit an Affidavit of Identity. The Affidavit of Identity must be signed by the candidate and notarized. According to South Haven City Clerk, Megan Kiker, she is a notary and can notarize forms if she is available at the time the form is submitted at the City Hall.

To be eligible to appear on the ballot for the South Haven City Council or Mayor, a candidate must have resided in the city for at least one year and be a registered voter of the city.

Duties of the Mayor involve being the executive head of the city and acting as presiding officer of the City Council. The City Council is the legislative and governing body of the City and has the power and authority to adopt ordinances and resolutions.

A city primary election will be held in August and the election of City Council and Mayor takes place in November.

Swing dance fundraiser to benefit Wings of God

PAW PAW - A group of Christian friends who love swing dancing will host a Swing Dance Fundraiser to benefit Wings of God Transition Home.

The fundraiser will be held Friday, March 21, from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at Freshwater Community Church, 600 E. Michigan, Paw Paw. Tickets are $10 at the door.

It is open to any age and any skill level. Dress for the night is modest attire.

For those who have never danced before, there will be an opportunity to learn.

Wings of God Transition Home is a life-changing ministry that helps women find freedom and transformation through Jesus Christ.

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PAW PAW

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27503 CR 375
Pastor Len Schoenherr
668-2811 • www.almenaumc.com
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
(Childcare Provided)
FRIDAY: AA- 8 p.m.

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COVEY HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
33566 28th Avenue
(corner of 28th & M-40)
269-628-2139 • www.coveyhill.org
Pastor Daniel Wilson
SUNDAY
Worship @10:45am
Nursery & Children's Church provided
Messages available on YouTube

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FAITH OF THE APOSTLES CURCH
34580 M-40 Highway
Elder David Harn
1 (269) 512-4586
SUNDAY
Christian Education - 10 a.m.
Wroship Service - 11:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY • Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
32464 Red Arrow
Pastor Horace M. "Buddy" Turner... 657-2090
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
on Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/buddyturner2 or search:
"Buddy Turner"

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
120 Pine St, Paw Paw
Worship: 11am Sundays
in person or online at -
www.pawpawpres.com or
www.youtube.com/@1stprespawpaw

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NEW HOPE FAMILY
201 W. Michigan Avenue
Pastor Mark Roberts
www.newhopefellowship.org
SUNDAY
Morning Worship - 10 a.m.

••••

PAW PAW SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CURCH
60409 South M-40
Pastor Sean Reed
Lawn Services - 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.pawpaw.church
Oline worship services on Facebook &
YourTube

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PAW PAW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
657-7727 • 420 W. Michigan Ave.
Pastor Dan Phillips
SUNDAY Service: 10:00 am

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RED ARROW MINISTRIES
31133 Red Arrow Highway
Rev. G. Ben Bowater, IV Founding Pastor
SUNDAY Worship - 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.redarrowministries.org for live stream
worship

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412 Cedar Street
Handicap Accessible
657-3762 • www.stmarkpawpaw.com
e-mail: stmarkspawpaw@gmail.com
Mailing Address:
P.O.Box 307, Paw Paw, MI 49079
SUNDAY Worship 9:30 a.m.

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ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
500 Paw Paw Street
Rev. Fr. Alan P. Jorgensen
657-4459
SATURDAY Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
SUNDAY MASSES - 9AM & 11AM
Holy days & Daily Masses
Consult Bulletin

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721 Pine Street
Pastor Phillip Phifer
Church: 657-4840
School: 657-5921
Sunday Services 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

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TRUTH CHURCH
32560 56th Ave. • 657-5042
www.truthchurchpawpaw.com
Pastor Steven Green
SUNDAY
School - 10 a.m.
Evening Service - 6 p.m.
THURSDAY Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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IGLESIA DEL ESPÍRITU SANTO/ CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
30037 E Red Arrow Hwy., Bilingual
Pastors Maggie and Jay Salas
Domingo/Sunday:
Adoración | Worship- 10 a.m.
Jueves/Thursday: Oracion/ Estudió Bíblico |
Prayer/Bible Study- 7 p.m.
(269) 377-6514/ (269) 993-6727

LAWTON

DAILY HARVEST MINISTRIES
117 S.Franklin Street
Pastor Jack Shanley
SUNDAY Worship - 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Bible Study - 6 p.m.

••••

IGLESIA PENTECOSTES
Eel Movimiento misionero Mundial, Inc.
Bilingual
117 S. Franklin Street
Pastors Arturo & Lourdez Hernandez
(616) 656-0137
SERVICES
Domingo - 9:30 a.m.
Martes y Jueves - 7:30 p.m.
Local: (269) 655-8071

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(269) 299-2003

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ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
624-1050
Pastor Ashlei Horn
SUNDAY Worship - 10:00 a.m.
www.stpoulsumclawton.com or on Facebook
www.Facebook.com/Lawton-St-Pauls-UMC

MARCELLUS

ST. MARGARET MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
296 E. Dibble St.
Rev. Fr. Alan P. Jorgensen
668-3312
SUNDAY - 9:45AM

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Worship 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study &
Prayer 5:00 p.m.
facebook.com/DecaturBibleChurch • http://
www.decaturbible.org

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Decatur New Hope Community Church
319 ½ West Delaware Street
Pastor Ross Tarantino
SUNDAY • Worship Service-10:00 a.m.
TUESDAY • Bible Study-1:00 p.m.
269-423-8136
info@decaturnewhopecommunity.net

MATTAWAN

Calvary Community Church
7829 S. 5th St
Pastor Gregory VanHeukelom
375-6240 • www.calvaryreformed.org
Website: https://www.calvary-community.
church/
Worship still 10 am Sunday with live Facebook
Jody's Closet, a free clothing ministry is open
Mon/Tue 10am-12 and Thur 6-7:30pm
And the 1st Saturday of the month 8:30-10am.•

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FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
56070 Murray Street
Pastor Chuck Rawsthorne
SUNDAY
School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service - 10:30 a.m.
(In person and on Facebook)

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MATTAWAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
23680 Front Ave.
668-3263 • www.mattawancc.com
mattawancommunitychurch@gmail.com
Pastor Eric Baird
SUNDAYS AT 10:25 A.M

••••

ST. JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC CHURCH
23830 Front Ave.
Rev. Fr. Alan P. Jorgensen
668-3312 • www.stjohnbosco.com
SUNDAY Mass - 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.
SATURDAY 4 p.m.

LAWRENCE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Exchange & James Street • 674-8381
Pastor Doug Tipken
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
lawrencemethodist-church.org
for information of online videos

GOBLES

NORTHPOINT MINISTRIES OF GOBLES
04077 M40 • 269-628-9199
northpointgobles@gmail.com
Pastors: Gary Lounsberry & John Losen Jr.
Sunday: 11am - Morning Worship
Monday: 7 pm - REFRESH Bible Study
Wednesday: 7pm - Prayer Meeting

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SPORTS

Brennan sparks Paw Paw to title

Truman Brennan had another strong basketball season for Paw Paw

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Truman Brennan and his Paw Paw teammates enjoyed a special season for the Wolverine Conference title and a 19-4 overall record.

It was the third varsity season for Brennan, a junior, and he said it was his best.

Team highlights included winning conference for the first time in 20 some years and another highlight was beating Grand Rapids Catholic Central which advanced to the state semifinals.

"We were a pretty undersized team so I think the key for us," Brennan said, "was everyone coming together. Everyone was doing their part playing more physical. We had to work harder than everyone else. We didn't have the height advantage other teams had."

The key over GRCC was "all heart," Brennan said "We got up by 13 the first half and had to claw our way back. It did not happen right away. A little bit in the second quarter and a little bit in the third. The second half, we just did enough.

Brennan played point guard and shooting guard, depending on the game. It was scoring or setting hus teammates up and finding the teammate with the hot hand. He had a high game of 24 points against Three Rivers.

"I got to them early in that game attacking the basket," he said. "This year I did more of the little things like rebounding and playing defense. That was big. Last year we won districts which we didn't do this year. But everyone worked hard in practice and it translated into the game. Next year we lose one senior. As long as we work in offseason, next year should be better."

Brennan is also a sprinter and long jumper in track.

Carlin battles injury this season

Finn Carlin finished third in the state as a freshman.

GOBLES — Finn Carlin sophomore, 138 pounds wrestler for Gobles, was 28-3 in 2024 and third in the state finals last season. He's wrestled 10 years

"He's a complete wrestler. Very intelligent. Tough as they come. Limited all season due to significant injuries which eventually prohibited post-season participation," coach Erin Carlin said. "His top work ethic will see him better than ever."

"It didn't end the way I wanted to because of my injury," Finn said. "I was happy to wrestle when I had the opportunity. I broke my back and was not able to compete in playoffs."

Carlin said his back injury is still a mystery

"We think it happened during football season before wrestling but we are not sure," he said. "It started bothering me in mid-September. I didn't get MRI results and x-rays before wrestling playoffs and that ended my season right there."

Even before this the injury impacted his regular season. He said he's out for 10 weeks from any sports.

"I hopefully will not need surgery," he said. "If I don't I will do summer and spring wrestling as long as I can."

Surgery would probably keep him out longer Carlin said.

"It was cool to wrestle in tournaments when I could."

Jackson finishes strong junior season

Daisy Jackson was a key scorer for Gobles.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Daisy Jackson had a strong junior girls basketball season for Gobles This was her second year.

"It went pretty good, better than I thought it would because we lost three of our starters," she said. "It was definitely different. We did good for what we had."

Gobles advanced as far as the district finals before being eliminated.

"The regular season we were more of a defensive team, for me at least," Jackson said. "We all did pretty well. Scoring was pretty good."

Gobles finished second in the conference and had a 12-11 overall record.

Sweeping Martin 43-41 and 32-29 were two hard-earned victories, Jackson recalled along with a 61-55 win over Holland Black River in the district finals.

Jackson was a post player for Gobles. Her role was a little bit of everything, especially passing and rebounding.

Jackson averaged around 10 points per game. Her best points total for a game was 16 points. Her best shot was short range fadeaway.

"I feel my defense improved a lot from last year," Jackson said. "I was more of a defensive player this year than offensive. I feel there was a lot of improvement. We lost some seniors starters so I had to step up. There was a lot of improvement in all phases of the game."

She hopes to improve on everything again next season.

Jackson also plays high school and travel softball.

Jackson plays shortstop and catcher in softball.

"For high school softball it's looking pretty good,"Jackson said.

Jackson was all-conference honorablemention last season for baksetball.

Senior center plays key role for Mattawan hockey

Seniors Dominic Vezeau (left) and Carson Mattern played key roles in Mattawan's 20-win hockey record this season.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Mattawan's hockey team came off a strong 20-5-1 season with seniors like senior center Dominic Vezeau leading the way.

It was his third year of hockey with the Wildcats.

"I played center my first year, then I became a winger," Vezeau said.

He was a goal producer for the Wildcats, and he recalls scoring a goal against Portage.

His strength was "getting the puck in deep and working it in the corners as one of my better strengths."

The team was able to do so well "I think because of our chemistry. Off the ice we do a lot of team bonding together," Vizeau said.

This has been the best team for Vezeau.

"We've got the experience and I think our coaching staff has gotten better over the years," he said. "Our practices are a lot more (intense)."

Among the nicest wins for the team was a 5-2 win over a very competitive Portage Northern team.

Vezeau will play lacrosse for Mattawan's boys spring team. One of his Mattawan teammates was his stepbrother Carson Mattern.

Three Gobles players receive honors

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Three Gobles players received all-conference honors this season.

Picking up first-team honors were junior Jayden Otis who averaged 14 points and 8.5 rebounds a game and Aden Newberry who was at 11 points and nine boards a game.

Honorable mention honors for all-conference went to Carter Crippin won averaged 11 points and 4.0 assists per game.

Gobles wound up with a 12-9 overall record.

The Tigers started out the season with wins of 46-29 over Decatur, 65-27 over Martin and 44-33 Delton Kellogg. Then there was a 57-56 loss to Marcellus Howardsville Christian followed by a 46-35 win over Holland Black River.

This was followed by losses of 54-48 to Hartford and 47-45 in overtime to Lawton. Then came wins of 53-33 over Bangor, 47-27 over Saugatuck and 56-21 over Martin.

This was followed with a 64-56 overtime loss to Galesburg-Augusta, a 51-37 win over Constantine. And a 56-33 loss to Delton-Kellogg.

Gobles cheerleaders wrap up strong season

By John Raffel

GOBLES — Gobles' varsity competitive cheer Bring it back blue team No. 1 wrapped up the season with great growth in the sport.The ladies qualified for Academic All State as a team and Bella Laughlin as Individual Academic honors.

"These six worked hard all season to be the best versions of themselves. It's been an honor," coach Sarah Ashbrook.e3

Presley Adams was second team All-District Honorable mention, all-conference, MVP and four-year varsity letter award.

Lillianne Ashbrook was second team All-District, All-Conference MVP and committed to Aquinas College Cheer

Martina Pucello was all-conference and Most improved/ Bella Laughlin was All Conference Honorable mention, Tiger award recipient, Academic all state individual.

Makenna Hunt was the Crowd Specialist award recipient.

Maggie Morand was most improved.

Gobles competed in the Division 4 competitive cheer meet at Schoolcraft and took seventh out of 12 teams. Gobles had 644.10 points. The top four teams advanced to regionals. The fourth-place team was Schoolcraft, which posted a three-round total of 653.30. Gobles was only 9.2 points away from qualifying for the regional meet.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PORTER TOWNSHIP VAN BUREN COUNTY
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 4, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Moraitis and six guests.

- Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on January 8, 2025. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to approve the Treasurer's report subject to audit. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Packer with support by Nesbitt to approve the bills as presented. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to approve Supervisor Oxley's recommendation to hire Jennifer Turner Robertson as an Assessor Assistant at a rate of $25 per hour. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to approve Supervisor Oxley's recommendation to reappoint Tim Seppala and Todd Hackenberg to the Planning Commission for 3-year terms. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Packer with support by Bitely to adjust the March Board of Review hours to March 12 from 10 am to 4 pm and March 13 from 3 pm to 9 pm. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Nesbitt with support by Bitely to approve a resolution to request the assistance of the County of Cass pursuant to Act 185 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1957, as amended. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 pm. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heather Smith
Porter Township Clerk

State of Michigan
Judicial Circuit - Family Division Van Buren County
PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF HEARING REGARDING PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE
Case No 2025-7010-NC • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
IN THE MATTER OF HAZEL GRACE BEACH-PALMER

TO ALL PERSONS, including: (specify non-custodial parent's name here,if applicable) whose address is unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following: Take Notice: **Derek Beach** has filed a petition for name change. A name change hearing will be held on **April 30,2025 (04/30/2025) at 11:00 am before Judge Susan Metzger** to change the name of:

Hazel Grace Beach- Palmer to Hazel Grace Beach

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1040-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
ESTATE OF KATHLEEN R. LIPKA, DECEASED

TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Kathleen R. Lipka, died May 1, 2024 (05/01/2024)**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **David A. Lipka, III,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 11,2025

Attorney:
Christopher N. Moraitis P87052
181 West Michigan Ave. Ste. 1, P.O.Box 520, Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-31771
Personal Representative
David A. Lipka, III
73692 M-40, Lawton, MI 49065
269-672-2951

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1036-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
ESTATE OF BRUCE LOWELL BARBER, DECEASED
Date of Birth: April 13,1955 (04/13/1955)

TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Bruce Lowell Barber, died January 10,2024 (01/10/2024)**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Jennifer Fields,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 12,2025

Attorney:
Albert W. Laaksonen, II P43920
226 1/2 East Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-655-1035
Personal Representative
Jennifer Fields
34792 Mill Lake Road, Gobles, MI 49055
269-760-9277

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1039-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
ESTATE OF CALEB STEVEN DOONAN, DECEASED
Date of Birth: September 21, 1995 (09/21/1995)

TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Caleb Steven Doonan, died January 4, 2025 (01/04/2025)**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **LaUniqua D. Doonan,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 12,2025

Attorney:
Willis Law
Davis C. Martin P84717
491 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
269-492-1040
Personal Representative
LaUniqua D. Doonan
41448 Cardinal Street, Mattawan, MI 49071
616-951-2614

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1037-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
ESTATE OF LILLIAN ALICE WHEELER, DECEASED
Date of Birth: March 29,1934 (03/29/1934)

TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Lillian Alice Wheeler, died January 3,2025 (01/03/2025)**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Steven Wheeler,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 12,2025

Attorney:
Albert W. Laaksonen, II P43920
226 1/2 East Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-655-1035
Personal Representative
Steven Wheeler
34395 North Brookwood, Gobles, MI 49055
269-355-4042

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1030-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
ESTATE OF BARRY DEAN TAYLOR, DECEASED
Date of Birth: January 29,1952 (01/29/1952)

TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Barry Dean Taylor, died October 13,2023 (10/13/2023)**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Brett A. Taylor,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 14,2025

Attorney:
Stephanie S. Fekkes P43549
607 N. Broadway, Ste. A, Hastings, MI 49058
269-945-1921
Personal Representative
Brett A. Taylor
4323 Victoria Court, Middleville, MI 49333
616-299-5038

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1031-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
ESTATE OF CAROL-ANNE THOMAS CLAUSEN, DECEASED
Date of Birth: September 9,1930 (09/09/1930)

TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Carol-Anne Thomas Clausen, died December 30,2024 (12/30/2024)**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Christie Johnson or Peter Clausen Co-**personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 11,2025

Attorney:
Robert A. Wise P59159
8051 Moorsbridge Road, Portage, MI 49024
269-323-3400
Personal Representative
Christie Johnson
16586 77th Street, South Haven, MI 49090
269-330-0513
-
Peter Clausen
4100 Nicole Eileen Lane, Charlotte, NC 28216
240-422-9761

State of Michigan
36th Judicial District - 36th Judicial Circuit Van Buren County
SUMMONS
Case No. 2025-074580-DP

Plaintiff(s):
Alicia Santos Gonzalez
172 Corwin Rd, Apt. 1, Lawrence, MI 49064
(813) 764-6376
Plaintiff's Attorney:
Martha Olivia Villegas #P83628
P.O.Box 143, Oshtemo, MI 49077
(269) 888-4703

V

Defendant(s)
Arnulfo Ventura Jose
Unknown Address
Unknown Telephone Number

Domestic Relations Case
There are no pending or resolved cases within the jurisdiction of the family division of the circuit court involving the family or family members of the person(s) who are the subject of the complaint.
Civil Case
There is no other pending or resolved civil action arising out of the same transaction or occurrence as alleged in the complaint
Notice to the defendant: in the name of the people of the State of Michigan you are notified:

1. You are being sued.
2. You Have 21 Days after receiving this summons and a copy of the complaint to **file a written answer with the court** and serve a copy on the other party **or take other lawful action with the court** (28 days if you were served by mail or were served outside of Michigan)
3. If you don not answer or take other action within the time allowed, judgment may be entered against you for the relief demannded in the complaint.
4. If you require accommodations to use the court because of a disability or if you require a foreign language interpter to help you fully participate in court proceeding,s please contact the court immediately to make arragemens

Issue Date: 2/21/2025 Expiration Date: 5/22/2025
COURT CLERK SUZIE ROEHM

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: AARON JOHNSON; ATTY: POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES - POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES; 1ST PUB: 3/20/2025; ATTY FILE #: 320395; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE
is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Aaron Johnson, Married Man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Success Mortgage Partners, Inc., its successors and assigns Foreclosing Assignee: PennyMac Loan Services, LLC Date of Mortgage: March 26, 2019 Date of Mortgage Recording: April 9, 2019 Amount claimed due on mortgage on the date of notice: $127,073.41 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the Village of Mattawan, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Lot 67 in Westland Park No. 2, according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber 7 of plats, Page 61, Van Buren County Records. Commonly Known as: 57403 Rumshire Dr., Mattawan, MI 49071 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or upon the expiration of the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c), whichever is later; or unless MCL 600.3240(16) applies. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Purchaser: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee for any reason. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest, and the purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: 03/20/2025 Potestivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 320395

(03-20)(04-10)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BARBARA LYNN ROKOS; ATTY: TEAM H; 1ST PUB: 3/20/2025; ATTY FILE #: 521906F01; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Barbara Lynn Rokos, a single woman
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Village Capital & Investment, LLC
Date of Mortgage: October 26, 2020
Date of Mortgage Recording: October 30, 2020
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $52,040.17
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Part of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 34, Town 3 South, Range 16 West, Hartford Township, Van
Buren County, Michigan, described as beginning at the East 1/4 post of said Section 34, thence S 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds W, along the East line of said Section, 1014.42 feet to the point of beginning of the land herein described, thence continuing S 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds W, along the said East line, 300 feet to the South line of the Northeast 1/4 of said Southeast 1/4, thence N 89 degrees 45 minutes 00 seconds W, along said South line, 300 feet, thence North 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds E, parallel with the East line of said Section, 300 feet, thence S 89 degrees 45 minutes 00 seconds E, parallel with the South line of the northeast 1/4 of said Southeast 1/4 300 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 70858 62nd St, Hartford, MI 49057-8659
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: March 20, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1555936

(03-20)(04-10)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: MATE VUJIC; ATTY: TEAM J; 1ST PUB: 3/20/2025; ATTY FILE #: 490924F05; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Petar Vujic by Ante Vujic, his attorney-in-fact and Mate Vujic by Ante Vujic, his attorney-in-fact
Original Mortgagee: Bank of America, N.A.
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Select Portfolio Servicing, Inc.
Date of Mortgage: August 21, 2008
Date of Mortgage Recording: August 27, 2008
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $88,989.29
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Lawrence, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 26, Block 1 Boudreau Shores, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Van Buren County in Liber 5 of Plats, Page 2.
Common street address (if any): 60558 N Lakeshore Dr, Lawrence, MI 49064-9723
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: March 20, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

Continues on page 11

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations for Van Buren County, Michigan (All Jurisdictions)

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency has issued a preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), and where applicable, Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report, reflecting proposed flood hazard determinations within Van Buren County, Michigan (All Jurisdictions). These flood hazard determinations may include the addition or modification of Base Flood Elevations, base flood depths, Special Flood Hazard Area boundaries or zone designations, or the regulatory floodway. Technical information or comments are solicited on the proposed flood hazard determinations shown on the preliminary FIRM and/or FIS report for Van Buren County, Michigan (All Jurisdictions). These flood hazard determinations are the basis for the floodplain management measures that your community is required to either adopt or show evidence of being already in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. However, before these determinations are effective for floodplain management purposes, you will be provided an opportunity to appeal the proposed information. For information on the statutory 90-day period provided for appeals, as well as a complete listing of the communities affected and the locations where copies of the FIRM are available for review, please visit FEMA's website at https://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/BFE_Status/bfe_main.asp or call the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) toll free at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
VILLAGE OF PAW PAW
PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission of the Village of Paw Paw will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 7:00 pm, at the Paw Paw Township Hall, located at 114 N. Gremps, Paw Paw, Michigan to consider the following application:

APPLICANT	Patrick Warner, Warner Vineyards
APPLICATION TYPE	Special Land Use Permit Request for an Outdoor Entertainment Venue
PROJECT ADDRESSES	706 S Kalamazoo Street
PROJECT PARCEL NUMBER(S)	80-47-160-006-10
ZONING DISTRICT	B-2 General Business District
DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST	The applicant requests a special land use permit to operate an Outdoor Entertainment Venue.

This application is available at the Village of Paw Paw offices for public examination and review during normal business hours. Interested persons may submit comments in writing before the public hearing, or appear in person at the public hearing to become part of the hearing record. The Village of Paw Paw will provide necessary and reasonable aids and services for disabled persons upon 5 days prior notice to the Village Offices at (269) 657-3148.

Kathy Larson, Chair
Village of Paw Paw Planning Commission

PUBLIC NOTICE

Continues from page 10

(248) 642-2515
1555956

(03-20)(04-10)

VAN BUREN; MTGR: ERIKA HENKE; ATTY: TEAM J; 1ST PUB: 2/27/2025; ATTY FILE #: 508366F02; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)- NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on March 27, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Erika Henke,a married woman, and Trent A Hunter, a single man, as joint tenants with rights of survivorship
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Citizens Bank, N.A.
Date of Mortgage: December 19, 2019
Date of Mortgage Recording: January 2, 2020
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $110,272.20
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in City of Gobles, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: COMMENCING AT A POINT 952.875 FEET (57 3/4 RODS) EAST OF THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SECTION 30, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST; THENCE SOUTH 214.5 FEET (13 RODS); THENCE EAST 49.50 FEET; THENCE NORTH 214.5 FEET (13 RODS); THENCE WEST 49.50 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. EXCEPT THE WEST 4.36 FEET OF THE NORTH 124 FEET OF THE FOLLOWING: COMMENCING AT A POINT 952.875 (57 3/4 RODS) EAST OF THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SECTION 30, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST; THENCE SOUTH 214.5 FEET (13 RODS); THENCE EAST 49.50 FEET; THENCE NORTH 214.5 FEET (13 RODS); THENCE WEST 49.50 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING
Common street address (if any): 310 E Van Buren St, Gobles, MI 49055-9307
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: February 27, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145,
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1553698

(02-27)(03-20)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: VINLAND SUSTAINABLE FARM LLC; ATTY: ANDREW BARNES - ANDREW BARNES; 1ST PUB: 2/27/2025; ATTY FILE #: (N/A); INSURER: (UNKNOWN)- NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 p.m., on March 27, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT, ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT THE NUMBER BELOW IF YOU ARE IN ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY. Default has occurred in the conditions of a Mortgage (the "Mortgage") made by VINLAND SUSTAINABLE FARM, LLC, a Michigan limited liability company, as Mortgagor(s), to Margaret Asrani, as Mortgagee. The Mortgage is dated April 28, 2020 and was recorded April 30, 2020 at Liber 1699 Page 558 of Van Buren County Records. The amount claimed to be due on said Mortgage and unpaid at the date of this Notice is TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-EIGHT THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FORTY AND 58/100 ($258,240.58) DOLLARS, including interest on the applicable indebtedness at a default rate of 6.00% per annum. This sum will increase as additional interest, costs, expenses, and attorney fees accrue under the Mortgage and its related note and which are permitted under Michigan law after the date of this Notice. No legal or equitable proceedings have been instituted to recover the debt secured by the Mortgage, and the power of sale in the Mortgage has become operative by reason of the default. At the date and time as referenced previously in this Notice, the Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the property herein described, or some part of them, at public auction, to the highest bidder, for the purpose of satisfying the amount due and unpaid on the Mortgage, along with interest due, the legal costs and charges of sale as allowed by statute and/or the Mortgage, and any taxes and insurance that the Mortgagee pays on or prior to the date of said sale. The property mentioned and described in the Mortgage, as located in the Township of Covert, County of Van Buren, and State of Michigan, are more particularly described as follows: The North Half of the South Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 28, Town 2 South, Range 17 West; Address: 41337 78th St., Covert, MI 49043; Tax Parcel No.: 80-07-028-028-00. together with all existing or subsequently erected or affixed buildings, improvements, and fixtures; all easements, rights of way, streets, roads, alleys, and public places, privileges, and appurtenances, public or private, now or later used in connection with the premises; and all rights to make divisions of the land that are exempt from the platting requirements of all applicable land division or platting acts, as amended from time to time. Attention Purchasers: the foreclosing Mortgagee reserves the right to cancel the sale prior to sale or to rescind this sale at any time. In that event, your damages, if any, will be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at the sale, plus interest. If the mortgaged property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The length of the redemption period will be six (6) months from date of sale, unless the redemption period is shortened pursuant to MCL 600.3241a or MCL 600.3238, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of sale or as otherwise provided by statute. DATED: February 27, 2025 ANDREW W. BARNES (P70571) BUTZEL LONG P.C. ATTORNEYS FOR MORTGAGEE 317 Center Street South Haven, MI 49090 269-287-2010

(02-27)(03-20)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: MARK A REDFERN; ATTY: SCHNEIDERMAN & SHERMAN, P.C. - SCHNEIDERMAN & SHERMAN, PC; 1ST PUB: 2/27/2025; ATTY FILE #: 25-000322-1; INSURER: (UNKNOWN) - SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on March 27, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Mark A. Redfern and Lori Redfern, husband and wife Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: July 6, 2018 Recorded on July 10, 2018, Liber 1670, on Page 995, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Seventy-One Thousand Six Hundred Twenty-Eight and 09/100 Dollars ($171,628.09) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: Part of the Northeast fractional quarter of fractional Section 4, Town 3 South, Range 15 West, Lawrence Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, described as commencing at the North quarter post of said Section 4; thence East along the North line of said Section 716.50 feet to the West line of a parcel of land described in a Quit Claim Deed recorded in Liber 1133 on page 991 and the point of beginning of the land herein described; thence continuing East along said North line 15.00 feet; thence South 00° 40` 29" East, parallel with the North and South quarter line of said Section 393.42 feet; thence West parallel with the North line of said Section 25.40 feet; thence South 00° 40` 29" East, parallel with the North and South quarter line of said Section 390.00 feet; thence East parallel with the North line of said Section 458.00 feet to a line which is 1164.10 feet East of and parallel with the North and South quarter line of said Section; thence South 00° 40` 29" East, along the last described line 676.565 feet to the South line of the North fractional half of said Northeast fractional quarter, also being the South line of a parcel of land described in a Memorandum of Land Contract recorded in Liber 1046 on page 21; thence North 89° 26` 32" West, along said South line 488.08 feet to a line which is 676.10 feet East of and parallel with the North and South quarter line of said Section, also being the West line of a parcel of land described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Liber 0878 on page 038 of Van Buren County records; thence North 00° 40` 29" West, along the last described line, 1237.233 feet to a line which Is 218 feet Southerly of and parallel with the North line of said Section; thence East along the last described line 40.40 feet to a line which is 716.50 feet East of and parallel with the North and South quarter line of said Section, also being the West line of a parcel of land described In a Quit Claim Deed recorded In Liber 1133 on page 991 of Van Buren County records; thence North 00° 40` 29" West, along the fast described line 218.00 feet to the place of beginning. Commonly known as 52757 48th Ave, Lawrence, MI 49064 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1554292

(02-27)(03-20)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BARBARA PRUITT; ATTY: TEAM X; 1ST PUB: 3/6/2025; ATTY FILE #: 522413F01; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)- NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 10, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Barbara Pruitt and Tom L. Pruitt, wife and husband
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing
Date of Mortgage: July 18, 2002
Date of Mortgage Recording: July 25, 2002
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $40,086.24
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Columbia, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: BEGINNING ON THE NORTH LINE OF SECTION 11, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST, AT A POINT 547.63 FEET SOUTH 89 DEGREES 03 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST OF THE NORTH QUARTER POST OF THE SECTION; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 03 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST ON THE SECTION LINE, 110.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 41 MINUTES 40 SECONDS EAST, 1314.83 FEET TO THE EAST AND WEST EIGHT LINE; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 01 MINUTES 33 SECONDS EAST ON SAME, 110.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 41 MINUTES 40 SECONDS WEST, 1314.78 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.
Common street address (if any): 49290 County Road 388, Grand Junction, MI 49056-9242
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: March 6, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1554681

(03-06)(03-27)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BEVERLY RACHEL HILTON; ATTY: RANDALL S. MILLER & ASSOCIATES, P.C. - RANDALL S. MILLER & ASSOCIATES, P.C.; 1ST PUB: 3/13/2025; ATTY FILE #: 22MI00347-6; INSURER: (UNKNOWN) FORECLOSURE NOTICE ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, April 10, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Beverly Rachel Hilton, A Single Woman to Republic Bank, Mortgagee, dated June 8, 2005, and recorded on June 13, 2005, in Liber 1439, Page 890, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated February 20, 2025 and recorded February 26, 2025 in Liber 1775, Page 249, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Forty-Seven Thousand One Hundred Forty and 94/100 ($47,140.94) including interest at the rate of 6.12500% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Village of Paw Paw, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Lots 2 and 3 excepting the South 50 feet thereof in Block 42, the Village of Paw Paw original plat. Commonly known as: 500 E SAINT JOSEPH ST, PAW PAW, MI 49079 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 12.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: March 13, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Carrington Mortgage Services LLC 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 22MI00347-6

(03-13)(04-03)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: KEVIN WAITE; ATTY: BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS - BROCK & SCOTT PLLC MI; 1ST PUB: 3/13/2025; ATTY FILE #: 24-18752; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the Mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by Kevin Waite to loanDepot.com, LLC dated March 7, 2022 and recorded March 14, 2022 in Liber 1734 at Page 324, Van Buren County, Michigan. Said Mortgage is now held by loanDepot.com, LLC by assignment and/or merger. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $169,026.72. Said premises are located in Van Buren County, Michigan and are described as: THE LAND SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF ALMENA, COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, STATE OF MICHIGAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING ON THE EAST LINE OF SECTION 18, TOWN 2 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, AT A POINT 1416.00 FEET NORTH OF THE EAST 1/4 POST OF THE SECTION; THENCE NORTH ON THE SECTION LINE 150.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89°35'54" WEST 340.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 150.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89°35'54" EAST, 340.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. Parcel/APN/Tax ID: 80-01-018-002-60 Said property is commonly known as 32846 32nd St, Paw Paw, MI 49079. The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be

Continues on page 12

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TOWNSHIP OF WAVERLY
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Waverly Township Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing and regular meeting concerning a variance request on Friday April 4, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at the Waverly Township Hall, 42114 M-43, within the Township.
Please take further notice that the matter to be considered at the public hearing include the following: JNSN LLC (Narinder Singh) has petitioned for variances at 41963 M-43 80-18-016-008-00 to construct a new store and then demolish the existing store.

1. Side yard setback variance, required setback abutting residential property is 25 feet. The request is for 17 feet of relief on east and south property line (to be 8 feet from property line).
2. Parking space location variance, required 30 feet from right-of-way line (M-43) and CR 665. Request is for parking space(s) to be up to the right-of-way line on M-43 and on CR 665.
3. Parking space location, required 10 feet from south side line. Request for parking space to be up to the property line.

Written documents may be submitted to the Clerk at 42114 M-43 Paw Paw MI 49079 up to the date of the hearing and may also be submitted at the hearing.
Anyone interested in reviewing the related application may examine a copy at the Waverly Township Hall by contacting the Clerk (269-657-1776) or the Zoning Administrator (1-800-626-5964) during normal business hours.
Necessary and reasonable aids for disabled persons will be made available with sufficient notice to the clerk.

Starr Houston, Clerk
42114 M-43
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-1776

New restaurant to open on Broadway in South Haven

By James Windell

Tony Carano, one of the owners of Barrio Michigan, was busy splicing electrical wires a week ago as his latest restaurant was preparing for a grand opening.

Seated at a table not far away, Deanna Carano, the Director of Operations for Barrio, handled the questions about the newest eatery to open in downtown South Haven.

"This is our first location to open as a second-generation restaurant," Deanna Carano said. The previous occupant of the space at 248 Broadway, Social House Kitchen and Bar, closed a few months ago. "This was our first Barrio Michigan to open in a former restaurant, so it was easier for us to flip it," Carano said. "It already had plumbing and electric, we just had to come in and clean it and put our mark on it with some fresh new details."

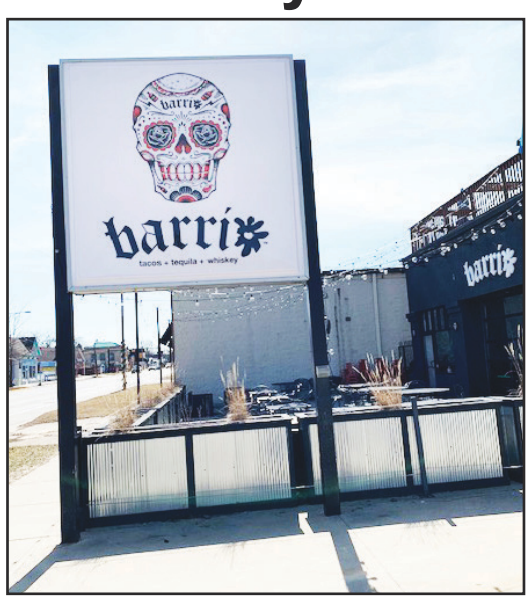
Among the details added is original art on the walls, some of which pays homage to the South Haven pier and lighthouse and the Ice Breaker Festival.

The restaurant which offers a wide variety of taco options as well as more than 30 whiskeys, 60 tequilas and 30 bottled beers will open on March 19 at 3:00 pm.

"Tacos are our number one specialty," Carano says. "We have a build-your-own concept. You can build like a million different tacos. Actually, you could come in here every day of the year and get a different taco. So, we are not a traditional Mexican restaurant by any means. Our flavors are Tex-Mex."

Carano emphasized that they see themselves as a specialized and customizable restaurant. "Not only can you build a taco however you want, but you could make it into a bowl," she explained. "We have appetizers, guacamole, and a great number of specialty cocktails."

This particular Barrio is the fourth



Michigan location for the Ohio-based company. She said there was a specific reason they chose South Haven for their latest establishment. "One of our regular customers knows the landlord here," Carano says. "He told us about the property and said we should check it out. We already have a location up in Traverse City that we have had a lot of success with. We really like being in a beach town and we said why not try South Haven."

Barrio's hours are Monday through Wednesday 10:00 am to 10:00pm; Thursday 11:00 am until 10:00 pm; Friday and Saturday 11:00 am until midnight; and Sunday 11:00 am to 10:00 pm.

"We are an affordable, budget-friendly place," Carano added. "You can come in and get a taco and a marguerita and spend less than twenty dollars. We want to be a good neighborhood joint."

PUBLIC NOTICE

Continues from page 11

held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages, if any, are limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Please be advised that any third party purchaser is responsible for preparing and recording the Sheriff's Deed. If this is a residential Mortgage, the following shall apply: ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. IF YOU: ARE A DEBTOR IN AN ACTIVE BANKRUPTCY CASE; ARE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A BANKRUPTCY STAY; OR, HAVE RECEIVED A DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY AND YOU HAVE NOT REAFFIRMED THE DEBT, THIS NOTICE IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT FROM YOU PERSONALLY. Dated: March 7, 2025 Attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage: Thomas E. McDonald (P39312) Brock & Scott, PLLC 5431 Oleander Drive Wilmington, NC 28403 PHONE: (844) 856-6646 File No. 24-18752

(03-13)(04-03)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: GARED M OWSIANY; ATTY: HOLZMAN, RITTER & LEDUC, PLLC - HOLZMAN CORKERY, PLLC; 1ST PUB: 3/13/2025; ATTY FILE #: (N/A); INSURER: (UNKNOWN)- MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE NOTICE Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under Section 3212 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 P.M., on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Gared M. Owsiany a/k/a Gared Owsiany, a married man, ("Mortgagor"), gave a mortgage to United Bay Community Credit Union, ("Mortgagee"), dated August 25, 2020, and recorded on September 03, 2020, in Liber 1705, on Page 554, Van Buren County Records, Michigan. On the date of this notice, there is claimed to be due the principal of One Hundred Thirty-Two Thousand Two Hundred Forty-Eight Dollars and 75/100 Dollars ($132,248.75) plus accrued interest at 3.25% per annum. Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at the place of holding in the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan @ 1:00 P.M. on Thursday, April 17, 2025. Said premises are situated in the Township of Paw Paw, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and are described as: Beginning at a point found by commencing at the Southeast Corner of Section 22, Town 3 South, Range 14 West, according to the government survey thereof, and running thence with bearing referenced to a survey recorded in Liber 1 of Survey Maps, Page 314, North 88 degrees 16 minutes 41 seconds West along the South Line of the Southeast quarter of said Section 1045.58 feet to the point of beginning of this description; Thence North 01 degree 04 minutes 40 seconds east parallel with the East line of said Southeast Quarter 835.00 feet; Thence South 88 degrees 16 minutes 41 seconds East parallel with said South line 522.78 feet; thence South 01 degree 04 minutes 40 seconds West 835.00 feet to the South line of said Section; thence North 88 degrees 16 minutes 41 seconds West 522.78 feet to beginning, according to a survey made by Smith and Smith, Inc., recorded in Liber 2 of Survey Maps, Page 78 on June 20, 1972. Commonly: 38338 64th Avenue Paw Paw, MI 49079—Tax Id #80-14-022-044-00 The redemption period shall be six months from the date of such sale unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, under Section 600.3278 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, the Mortgagor will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Dated: March 13, 2025 United Bay Community Credit Union, Mortgagee Holzman Law, PLLC By: Charles J. Holzman Attorney for Mortgagee 28366 Franklin Road Southfield, Michigan 48034 (248)352-4340

(03-13)(04-10)

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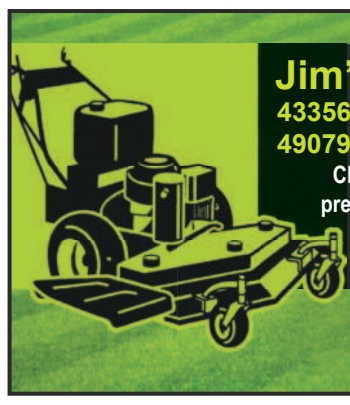
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